

**Under Secretary Uzra Zeya's Remarks at the  
Global Refugee Forum Plenary Session – Broadening the Base of Support**

Thank you, Ms. Khurram, for your excellent moderation, and to all our distinguished speakers. My thanks also to the Government of Switzerland, UNHCR, and co-conveners of this important event.

I am honored to be here, reflecting on the importance of collective humanitarian action. Indeed, I am inspired by each speaker's interventions, which make abundantly clear that we all need to do our parts to innovate, collaborate, and meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. From sport to fashion, local organizations to banking institutions, we all have a role to play. Ms. Dhieu, your poignant remarks are a beacon to refugees and displaced people around the world, reminding us that refugee experiences, views, and voices must serve as our guiding light for humanitarian action.

Since this forum last met in 2019, many of our governments have made monumental strides in adapting our traditional humanitarian tools and partnerships.

For our part, the United States has championed four specific initiatives to foster an environment that helps refugees and host communities thrive, while also

expanding refugee resettlement and pathways for those not qualifying as refugees.

First, to mobilize new investments in fragile and refugee hosting areas we have partnered with the World Economic Forum in launching a Call to Action to raise \$10 billion in new investment by 2030 for fragile markets, like those in northern Kenya.

Second, to advance refugee inclusion and move beyond conventional livelihoods models, we are implementing a formal agreement with the Tent Partnership for Refugees, a group of international businesses, to complement and expand work and training opportunities for refugees.

Third, we have launched a new program, the Safe Mobility Initiative, which accelerates our identification of and support for individuals who may qualify for refugee resettlement or other lawful immigration pathways. We are deeply grateful to the countries hosting Safe Mobility Offices, including Guatemala, Colombia, Ecuador, and Costa Rica. We are also appreciative of Canada and Spain for their gracious commitment to welcoming refugees as part of the Safe Mobility initiative. We hope to build upon and expand this model over time.

Lastly, we are proud to have launched the most significant innovation in the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program in decades, the Welcome Corps. This program

makes it possible for Americans from all walks of life, including universities and employers, to directly sponsor the resettlement of refugees and help them build new lives in our country. These innovations will help us expand our capacity and meet our goal of resettling 125,000 refugees in fiscal year 2024.

As we continue to reimagine the future of humanitarian response, diplomacy and collaboration are at the heart of this exercise.

We are living in a pivotal moment when crises around the world are multiplying. The desperate situation in Gaza is a case in point. As a result of Hamas' horrific October 7 terrorist attacks that resulted in the deadliest day in Israel's history and brutalized women, children, men, and the elderly, millions of civilians who bear no responsibility for these atrocities, are suffering. It is critical to grow and sustain life-saving humanitarian assistance to civilians in Gaza to avoid an even worse humanitarian catastrophe, even as we urgently work to end the war. We are intensifying our collective efforts. We know much more aid is needed urgently and are proud of our support to UNRWA and other actors in Gaza helping get humanitarian assistance into the hands of the most vulnerable.

The United States will continue to provide robust humanitarian financing as we face unprecedented levels of displacement globally. To solve today's complex and protracted emergencies we are adopting a whole of government approach

and increasingly relying on the expertise, resources, and commitment of our friends in the private sector. We are making 26 unique commitments joining eight multistakeholder pledges demonstrating continued U.S. leadership in this work, including commitments on economic inclusion, preventing gender-based violence, ending statelessness, multiple pledges around resettlement and complementary pathways, support for Rohingya refugees, and inclusion of refugees in education systems.

That is why I am pleased that the U.S. delegation includes my colleagues from the Department of State, USAID, the Development Finance Corporation, the Treasury Department, and National Security Council, as well as colleagues from Welcome Corps on Campus, the Refugee Investment Network, and Nejra Sumic, a Bosnian refugee turned advocate in the United States, who tirelessly works to raise awareness and support for the challenges faced by refugees.

No one nation, organization, or person can go it alone to meet historic unmet needs. We must work closer together than ever before.

Thank you.